

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Claim 2 is requested to be cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 1, 4-7, 9, 10, 14, 16, 17, 19-21, 24, 27 and 31 are currently being amended. Support for the amendments to claim 10 can be found at least in FIGs. 6 and 7, and the corresponding description in the specification.

This amendment changes and deletes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1 and 3-34 are now pending in this application.

Allowable subject matter

Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 12, 13, 15, 18, 19 and 30 are allowed, and that claims 2-8, 11, 14, 16, 17, 19-27 and 31-34 contain allowable subject matter.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claims 1-9, 14, 16, 17, 19-27 and 31-34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The claims have been amended to address the issues raised in the Office Action, and applicants submit that the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph has been overcome.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 9 and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,870,896 to Clark et al. ("Clark"). Claims 10 and 28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 58-137670 ("JP '670"). These rejections are moot

with respect to claims 1 and 9, in light of the amendment to claim 1 to include features indicated as allowable from claim 2, and in light of the amendment to claim 9 to depend from claim 1. With respect to the rejections of claims 10 and 28, Applicants respectfully traverse for at least the following reasons.

Claim 10

Independent claim 10 recites:

A steam valve comprising:
a valve casing including a main steam inlet at one side and a main steam outlet disposed at another side in an opposite direction and in parallel with the main steam inlet;
a strainer provided in the valve casing; and
a closing portion provided in the strainer at a position and extending substantially in a first direction and a second direction, the first direction being orthogonal to an axial line of each of the main steam inlet and the main steam outlet, the second direction being parallel to the axial line of each of the main steam inlet and the main steam outlet.

Neither Clark nor JP ‘670 disclose at least the above italicized feature of claim 1, where the closing portion is provided in the strainer at a position and extending substantially in a first direction and a second direction, the first direction being orthogonal to an axial line of each of the main steam inlet and the main steam outlet, the second direction being parallel to the axial line of each of the main steam inlet and the main steam outlet.

With respect to Clark, the axial line of its main stream inlet and main stream outlet is not in the same direction, so there can be no second direction which is “parallel to the axial line of each of the main steam inlet and the main steam outlet.”

With respect to JP ‘670, the portion of the strainer 5 without holes does not extend in a direction which is parallel to the axial line (the direction *f* in FIG. 1 of JP ‘670) of each of its main steam inlet and the main steam outlet. Thus, JP ‘670 fails to disclose that the closing portion is provided in the strainer at a position and extending substantially in a first direction and a second direction, the first direction being orthogonal to an axial line of each of the main

steam inlet and the main steam outlet, the second direction being parallel to the axial line of each of the main steam inlet and the main steam outlet.

Claim 28

Independent claim 28 recites:

A steam valve comprising:
a valve casing including a main steam inlet at one side and a main steam outlet disposed at another side in an opposite direction and in parallel with the main steam inlet;
a strainer provided in the valve casing;
a closing portion for blocking a part of a main steam flow flowing from outside to inside; and
a bulkhead provided between the strainer and the valve casing to prevent a collision of the two main steam flows having been separated by and flowing around from the closing portion.

JP '670, upon which the rejection of claim 28 is based, fails to disclose at least the above italicized feature of claim 28. The bulkhead as arranged in the valve of claim 28 addresses the problem where the main steam supplied from the first main steam inlet is divided into two parts at the inlet side of the strainer and passes thereover, but at the outlet side of the strainer, two steam jets mate and collide, thus causing a large mixture loss. The arrangement of the bulkhead as in claim 28 reduces the pressure loss of the steam valve by reducing the mixture loss. In order to achieve such object, the bulkhead of claim 28 is provided between the strainer and the valve casing.

JP '670 discloses projections 4, which are provided so as to extend from the casing side between the strainer and the casing on a side opposite to the main steam flowing sides. The projections 4 in JP '670, however, merely serve to guide the main steam branched from the main steam flowing side and which flows around the opposite side. These projections 4, however, in contrast to the bulkhead of claim 28, are not arranged between the strainer and the valve casing, do not prevent a collision of the two main steam flows having been separated by and flowing around from the closing portion and, hence, the collision of two streams cannot be prevented in the JP '670 design.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

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By

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